

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in this application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1 to 10. (Canceled).

11. (Currently Amended) An orifice introducer device comprising:
a tubular member having a lumen and a distal end;
a distal portion having a proximal end detachably connected to the tubular member, the proximal end having an annular groove that receives the distal end of the tubular member, configured to be detachably secured to the distal end of the tubular member, the distal portion being selectively detachable when the orifice introducer device is positioned in the orifice, wherein, when the distal portion is detached from the distal end of the tubular member, the proximal end of the distal portion contracts ~~so as~~ to have a smaller diameter than a diameter of the tubular member.

12. (Currently Amended) The orifice introducer device of claim 11, wherein, when the distal portion is secured to the distal end of the tubular member, a distal end of the distal portion has a smaller diameter than the diameter of the tubular member.

Claims 13 and 14. (Canceled).

15. (Currently Amended) The orifice introducer device of claim 11, further comprising a tubular insertion device within the lumen of ~~configured to be insertable through~~ the tubular member.

16. (Currently Amended) The orifice introducer device of claim 15, wherein the tubular insertion device is configured to detach the distal portion from the tubular member ~~when inserted through the tubular member.~~

17. (Currently Amended) The orifice introducer device of claim 16, further comprising a recovery device for withdrawing the distal portion through the lumen of the tubular member ~~when the distal portion has been detached from the tubular member.~~

18. (Currently Amended) The orifice introducer device of claim 17, wherein the recovery device is a string attached to ~~an inner wall of~~ the distal portion.

19. (Currently Amended) The orifice introducer device of claim 16, wherein, ~~when detached from the distal end of the tubular member,~~ the proximal end of the distal portion is made of an elastomeric material that radially contracts so as to have a smaller diameter than the tubular insertion device so as to be to allow the detached distal portion to be withdrawn through the lumen of the tubular insertion device.

20. (Currently Amended) The orifice introducer device of claim 11, further comprising wherein the orifice introducer device is configured to introduce a surgical device within the lumen into an orifice.

Claims 21 to 27. (Canceled).

28. (Currently Amended) A method for using an orifice introducer device comprising the steps of:
providing a tubular member having a distal end;
detachably securing a proximal end of a distal portion to the distal end of the tubular member by receiving the distal end of the tubular member in an annular groove at the proximal end of the distal portion, a distal end of the distal portion having a smaller diameter than the tubular member;
inserting the distal end of the distal portion into an orifice;
selectively detaching the distal portion from the tubular member;
the distal portion contracting so as to have a diameter smaller than a diameter of the tubular member;
and
withdrawing the distal portion through the tubular member.

Claims 29 and 30. (Canceled).

31. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 28, further comprising the step of inserting an element through the tubular member after withdrawing the distal portion.

32. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 31, wherein the element is ~~inserting step includes~~ inserting a surgical device through the tubular member.

33. (Original) The method of claim 28, wherein the selective detaching step includes inserting a tubular insertion device through the tubular member for contacting an inner wall of the distal portion.

Claims 34 to 38. (Canceled).

39. (Currently Amended) ~~An orifice introducer~~ A device comprising:
a tubular member having a distal end, the tubular member having therein a surgical stapler apparatus;
a second member being arranged internally within the tubular member and being configured to move longitudinally relative to the tubular member; and
a distal portion having a proximal end mounted to the distal end of the tubular member, the proximal end having an annular groove that receives the distal end of the tubular member, the distal portion being selectively detachable from the tubular member by engagement with the second member when the second member is moved distally longitudinally.

40. (Currently Amended) The ~~orifice introducer~~ device of claim 39, wherein at least a portion of the distal portion having a smaller diameter than the tubular member.

Claim 41. (Canceled).

42. (Currently Amended) The ~~orifice introducer~~ device of claim 39, wherein the distal portion is conical.

43. (Currently Amended) The ~~orifice introducer~~ device of claim 39, wherein the distal portion is tapered.